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THE LIBRARY ASSISTANTS' ASSOCIATION.

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15

EDITED BY HENRY A. SHARP.
(Central Library, Town Hall, Croydon).

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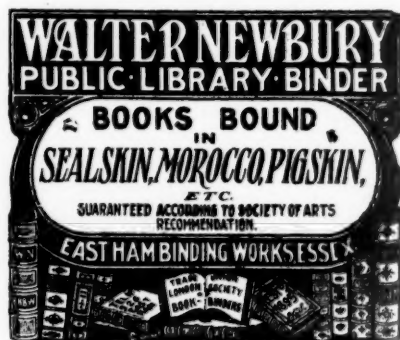
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ANNOUNCEMENTS.

By the kind permission of the Chief Librarian of Shoreditch, Mr. William C. Plant, F.L.A., the next General Meeting will be held at the Central Library, Pitfield Street, N., on **Wednesday, 19th January**, at 7.30 p.m. The Chair will be occupied by Mr. Plant, and Messrs. Richards and Wilson, of the Bethnal Green and Tottenham Public Libraries respectively, will open a discussion on "**The L.A.A. from the point of view of a provincial assistant.**"

An opportunity will be afforded for examining the library, which includes several features of interest, such as a Children's Reading Room, and some valuable special collections.

The subject is one of great interest to the Association as a whole, and it is desired that in the course of the discussion some practical suggestions shall be forthcoming as to how the L.A.A. may be of greater service to its members generally, and especially to those in the scattered provincial districts. It is hoped that there will be a record attendance on the occasion, and that some provincial members who are unable to attend will forward their views to the Honorary Secretary of the Education Committee, Mr. E. Luke, F.L.A., Public Library, Plumstead, S.E., not later than Tuesday, the 18th.

SOUTH COAST BRANCH.

The next meeting of the above Branch will be held at the Public Library, Museum and Art Galleries, Brighton, on **Wednesday, January 26th.**

Full particulars will be sent later to all libraries in the Branch area.

ERNEST MALE,
Honorary Secretary.

EDITORIAL.

The New Year.—We wish our readers a very happy new year. Signs are not wanting that the year will be one of great progress in the library world. Several rural library schemes will be launched, it is not unlikely that certain local authorities will put the Libraries Acts into operation, and, altogether we can afford to take a more optimistic view of librarianship than has been possible for many years. We hope that our own Association will

be able to take its place in this forward movement, and with this object in view we are able to offer our readers an extra four pages commencing with the present issue. If assistants up and down the country will rally round us there is no reason why the size of *The Library Assistant* should not be still further increased in the very near future. We know there is discontent in some quarters because it has been found necessary to increase the rates of subscription, but in adopting this course we are confident that the majority of our members will recognize that the Council has been prompted by a desire to make the Association, and especially its journal, a vital force, especially among those assistants who are deprived of so many of the privileges enjoyed by the staffs of large library systems or by those working near the great cities.

We are prepared to receive practical suggestions from readers as to the best means for accomplishing the ideal we have in view. For example, we hope in future to publish the best of the papers read before the parent Association and its Branches, and, with the co-operation of our readers, items of library news of current and general interest.

Congratulations.—On behalf of the Association we offer our heartiest congratulations to Messrs. W. Pollitt and J. E. Walker, upon the occasion of their appointments to the chief librarianships of Southend-on-sea and of Fulham, respectively. Both men are progressive, enthusiastic and fully qualified for the important positions they have been called to fill, and, what is equally important from our point of view, it will be found that they have the interests of library assistants close at heart. Mr. Walker received his early training at Gateshead, went to Tottenham as deputy-librarian in 1912, and to a similar position at Fulham last year. He holds all the sectional certificates of the Library Association, of which body he is a Fellow. He has been an active member of the Council of the L.A.A. for some years past, and has served the Association for a short time as Honorary Editor and, later, as Minuting Secretary.

Mr. Pollitt received his early training at Bolton, and went to Coventry in 1911, where he became chief assistant; he was appointed a senior assistant at Leeds in 1912, and eventually became chief of the cataloguing department there. He is a Fellow and Diplomat of the Library Association, and an active member of the Yorkshire Branch of the L.A.A.

Salaries.—At the last meeting of the L.A.A. Council the Scale of Salaries suggested by the Library Association was considered, and after careful discussion it was resolved to support the scale, which had been previously discussed by representatives of the two Associations. As far as assistants are concerned, it will be remembered that as a result of representations by the

N.A.L.G.O. and the Library Association, the scale printed in *The Library Assistant* for May last was withdrawn, and in its place the salaries pertaining to Grades A and B of the scale of the National Joint Council for Local Authorities' Administrative, Technical and Clerical Services were accepted.

The Library Association now deserves the thanks of assistants for including Grade C, which will be of considerable advantage to assistants in large library systems.

The suggested scale for librarians, deputy and sub-librarians, will be submitted to the National Joint Council during the present month. It has the support of the N.A.L.G.O., and there is every reason to believe that it will be accepted by the Joint Council. The scale is as follows:—

				Population of or under	(or)	Rateable value of, or exceeding
				(whichever may be the higher).		
Scale						
A.	Librarian ...	£250 by £25 to	£300 ...	10,000 ...		£50,000
B.	Librarian ...	£300 by £25 to	£450 ...	50,000 ...		£100,000
C.	Librarian ...	£375 by £25 to	£550 ...	100,000 ...		£200,000
	Sub. Librarian	£250 by £20 to	£350			
D.	Librarian ...	£425 by £25 to	£600 ...	150,000 ...		£300,000
	Sub. Librarian	£280 by £20 to	£400			
E.	Librarian ...	£500 by £40 to	£700 ...	200,000 ...		£400,000
	Sub. Librarian	£300 by £25 to	£450			
F.	Librarian ...	£550 by £50 to	£800 ...	300,000 ...		£500,000
	Sub. Librarian	£350 by £25 to	£500			
G.	Librarian ...	£550 by £50 to	£900 ...	400,000 ...		£750,000
	Sub. Librarian	£400 by £25 to	£650			
H.	Librarian ...	£750 by £50 to	£1,000 ...	500,000 ...		£1,000,000
	Sub. Librarian	£450 by £25 to	£600			
I.	Librarian ...	£850 by £50 to	£1,100 ...	600,000 ...		£1,500,000
	Dep. Librarian	£500 by £25 to	£700			
	Sub. Librarian	£400 by £25 to	£500			
J.	Librarian ...	£1,000 by £50 to	£1,250 ...	800,000 ...		£2,000,000
	Dep. Librarian	£550 by £40 to	£750			
	Sub. Librarian	£400 by £25 to	£550			
K.	Librarian ...	£1,200 by £100 to	£1,500 ...	1,000,000 ...		£3,000,000
	Dep. Librarian	£600 by £50 to	£800			
	Sub. Librarian	£450 by £25 to	£600			

NOTE.—(1.) Scales A, B, and C, of the Nat. Whitley Scale for clerical staffs to operate below ranks scheduled herewith.

(2.) "Sub-Librarian" to mean also Librarian-in Charge, Branch Librarian, etc.

We are glad to see that the Islington Public Libraries Committee has revised its advertisement for female assistants, increasing the number from two to four, and adding to the salaries £160 and £130 respectively, a bonus in each case of £33 6s. 8d.

We are not only of opinion that the present conditions warrant these salaries as a very minimum, but we are anxious that Islington's reputation as a model library system shall be maintained in this respect as well as in the more ordinary matters of administration.

The L.A.A. Council has protested against the salary of £250 offered by the Dorset County Council for a Rural Librarian, and has drawn the Education authority's attention to the recommendation of the Carnegie U.K. Trust to the effect that a minimum salary of £300 should be paid. We understand that the Dorset County Council is likely to approach the Trust for financial assistance, in which case we hope that it will only be forthcoming on condition that the librarian is paid in accordance with the expressed views of the Trust, although, as a matter of fact, we consider £300 too low under present conditions, for any chief position, whether rural or otherwise.

The worst advertisement we remember to have seen for a very long time is the one just issued by the "Free" Libraries Committee of Ipswich, asking for an assistant who must be over 21 years of age, have received a Secondary School education, and also have passed some recognised public examination. The person appointed will be required to pass the several examinations of the Library Association in due course. The commencing salary is £90 (ninety) per annum, rising by annual increments of £10 to £160, which means that if an unfortunate person of 21 is appointed, by the time he is 28 he—or she—will receive a trifle over £3 a week if the scale is adhered to. We submit that the terms of this advertisement are a disgrace to the County Borough of Ipswich and detrimental to the interests of librarianship. We feel sure that even the most economically minded people of Ipswich will demand its instant withdrawal.

We have further reasonable cause for complaint in that the advertisement says nothing about previous library experience. We think it is only reasonable to expect that authorities in need of assistants of over 21 years of age should stipulate for previous library experience, and should be prepared to pay a salary commensurate with that experience. In its present form, we can only infer that the advertisement is an attempt to trap a well-educated young person who feels attracted towards librarianship. We repeat, the advertisement is a disgrace to Ipswich, and one which, if only for the town's good name, we hope will be immediately put right.

PROCEEDINGS.

The December General Meeting was held on Wednesday, 8th December, at the National Library for the Blind, the Vice-President (Mr. J. D. Stewart) being in the Chair. The first part of the programme consisted of a choice selection of pianoforte solos ably rendered by Mr. H. V. Spanner, Mus.Bac., the librarian of the music section of the National Library, and himself a blind musician.

Miss Olive Prince, the librarian and secretary, then gave a brief address on the history and work of the National Library for the Blind, and conducted the party through the various departments of the Library, explaining in a most delightful manner the various processes connected with the preparation and circulation of books for blind readers in all parts of the world.

YORKSHIRE BRANCH.

A meeting of the Yorkshire Branch was held at Wakefield on Wednesday, November 17th, by kind permission of the Public Library Committee and the Chief Librarian, Mr. G. H. Wood. Members assembled at the Public Library at 3 p.m., and after a hearty welcome by the Chairman, Mr. Councillor H. H. Holdsworth, left for Clarke Hall, a sixteenth century house with original oak panelling, etc. This visit was undertaken on the kind invitation of Mr. H. C. Haldane, a member of the Library and Museum Committee, who conducted the party round the house and explained its historical features. From Clarke Hall the party proceeded to the Rolls Office of the Manor of Wakefield to inspect Ancient Deeds, the Gibbet Axe, Standard Measures, and other items of historical interest. Permission for this visit was granted by the kindness of Messrs. H. and N. C. Chalker, Stewards of the Manor; and the party was also indebted to Mr. Milner (Keeper of the Deeds) for the able and exceedingly interesting manner in which he discoursed upon the various exhibits.

Leaving the Rolls Office the party proceeded to "Holmfild" Public Park for tea, which was served on the kind invitation of Mr. Councillor H. H. Holdsworth. It should be noted that the journey to Clarke Hall, and from Clarke Hall to the Rolls Office, and thence to "Holmfild" Park was made by motor char-a-banc, also provided by Mr. Councillor Holdsworth.

In the evening a general meeting was held at the Public Library, when a paper was read by Mr. R. Ineson (Leeds) entitled "Some Mistaken Points of View." Mr. Ineson said that our designation of the Free Public Library was wrong, inasmuch as the Library is neither free nor public in the strict sense of the words. Another mistaken point of view was the attitude of library assistants towards the public. The speaker said that we all knew the assistant of the Claude de Vere type, immaculately dressed, with a supercilious look and the attitude of an owl, who sits still, blinks and looks wise. His idea is that the books are his, and that he is conferring a favour when he condescends to hand a book to a borrower, probably one that the borrower does not want. It is no part of the duty of the library assistant to make borrowers read books that they do not want to read. Another mistaken point of view was that "the larger the library the better the work." The most effective library was, in the speaker's opinion, the one with the best selection of books, where nothing was admitted but what was of undoubted value. Mr. Ineson also gave a brief summary of the many qualifications a librarian is expected to possess. He must know his stock and be able to say off-hand what

books are in the library. He must be able by a quick survey to place all new books in their respective classes. He must have sufficient experience of life to be able to manage a staff, to keep them thoroughly employed, and to train them. If a juvenile room is attached to his library he must have sufficient moral force to keep order; and he must also have sufficient knowledge to discriminate when a man in the newsroom is filthy or only dirty. He must be an accountant, expert indexer, know at least his mother tongue, and be tactful, courteous and firm. It is also necessary for him to have some knowledge of building, of the cleaning of buildings, heating and ventilation, be a partly trained gas engineer, electrician, joiner and book-binder; in fact the librarian is the nearest approach to a 'Jack-of-all-Trades' that the speaker ever heard of. These mistaken points of view created an animated discussion, and it was delightful to note the ease and abandon with which so many took part in the same.

A memorable gathering was brought to a conclusion with votes of thanks to all those who had contributed to its success—to Mr. Councillor Holdsworth for his generous provision of a "romping" tea, and the motor char-a-banc; to Mr. and Mrs. Haldane for permission to view their delightful home, Clarke Hall; to Mr. Ineson for his stimulating exposition of "Some Mistaken Points of View"; and most deservedly to Mr. Wood, Chief Librarian, Wakefield, for the admirable arrangements he had made for what proved to be one of the very best meetings ever held by the Branch.

R. W. PARSONS,
Honorary Secretary.

THE CINEMA, THE SCHOOL, AND THE PUBLIC LIBRARY.*

BY GURNER P. JONES, B.A., *Stepney Public Libraries.*

During the last few years there has rapidly developed in our social life a new episode which at first was, and for the most part is now, chiefly introduced as a commercial venture for public amusement. But lately it has been recognised that besides its recreative side, the cinema could be utilised as a powerful educational factor of no mean importance.

The Public Library has attempted to prove its necessity mainly as an adjunct of the national educational system of the country. As it claims, therefore, to be an educational agency, the Public Library must be fully alive to all educational movements and activities of the day with a view to co-operating with, and taking advantage of, all such progress. Hence we must seriously consider how much and how far the cinema can be used and exploited by the Public

*Read before the L.A.A., 14th April, 1920.

Library. As I have said before, the cinema has both a recreative and educational value, but is by no means an unqualified twentieth century boon and blessing to humanity. In fact, in dealing with the potentialities of the cinema we have a very difficult and dangerous problem to encounter. Films can, and do, have a very detrimental and harmful influence. We read much in the daily press of the beneficial uses of the cinema, but it must be remembered that after careful consideration of these claims, one can realise that there is much that should be rejected and only a little that can be really used for a beneficial and advantageous purpose.

Of all the great gifts given to mankind, and of all those which give joy to the heart of the child, few if any can excel in value that of imagination. To my mind the whole aim of our educational system should be so devised as to strengthen, deepen, broaden and improve the imagination of the child, both sympathetic and intellectual. For after all, most of the evils which arise from the national and social life of to-day spring directly from the lack—almost a tragic lack—of this sympathetic and intellectual imagination. We have yet to learn the enormous depths of psychology. Of all the dangerous and harmful agencies lurking uncontrolled to-day for the destruction and dwarfing of the imaginative faculties few can out rival the cinema. We all know how the child mind, attracted by all sorts of exciting and novel forms of amusement, is irresistibly drawn to the local Picture Palaces, but not many of us, I fear, fully realise the incalculable harm that is being done by the indiscriminate use of the cinema; harm not only to children but to adults also. The very ease with which one is enabled to see unfolded before his, or her, eyes, films of so-called world-wide stories, produced regardless of truth to essential details of plot, character, time and manner, tends to remove any effort of imagination and fills the mind with erroneous impressions. We are not allowed to cast in our own minds the scenes, the characters, the developments; all is done for the looker-on—no need even to think, only to sit and watch. Why has many a classic romance such a hold on our affections? a great deal of the charm, the beauty, the cherished memory of such lies in the wonderful, sweet and ineffable vision or visions conjured up in our minds which we can always carry with us. All of us as we read, construct; as we construct, we interpret; as we interpret, we understand life; and the fullest understanding of life is genius. The cinema comes along and gives us

another's impressions; we take our thoughts and dreams second-hand, part worn and mostly ill-fitting. Dangerous as it is thus for the mind of the grown person, so much the more is it for the mind of the child to be satiated with the evils of an indiscriminate and unguarded use of the cinema. We, as public educators, must be on our guard against the evils, yet on the other hand, fully alive to the advantages, which prevail in every passing phase.

Let us examine then a little wherein lies the relationship between the Cinema, the School, and the public Library. No doubt many of you have read that for some time past the educational authorities of the London County Council, in conjunction with the London University and other bodies, and by arrangement with film-producing companies, have secured a number of pictures of educational value for presentation in the elementary schools. This action on the part of the L.C.C. is the first really serious attempt to exploit the cinema in the interests of education; but the little that has been done has been restricted in value and curtailed in effort by the inadequacy of the means of exhibition. The school has, I understand, proved too small and limited an area for the fullest and best uses of cinema work. Most Public Libraries could here provide what the school lacks.

I will now attempt to outline briefly a scheme of co-operation between the School and the Public Library which I venture to think is simple of accomplishment and capable of extension; possessing great advantages for the library and of value to our educational system.

Let us start, say, with sixteen films; four to deal with well-known classics, such as "Robinson Crusoe," "Ivanhoe," etc. These books could be filmed, with the chief purpose in mind of reproducing with exact regard to fact and reality the essential details of the stories. Next, four films dealing with objects of everyday life, in which case an ordinary manufactured or produced article could be taken, beginning from its natural state, through the various processes of cultivation or manufacture, ending with the last and finished condition. For examples: the history of a cup and saucer; from a lump of clay to a domestic utensil, showing also its development in the various stages of our social history, etc. The life story of a piece of coal; from the mine to the hearth, etc. Our daily bread; from the field to the feeder; and so on. Another four films concerning foreign countries, the peoples, conditions of life, scenery, habits, customs, etc.

Lastly, four films illustrating animal, bird and insect life, etc. Films of all these classes would not be stunting the imagination but helping towards its stimulation. For the young mind would be able to see truth and reality in a manner impossible before. Once having acquired the working repertoire of films, they could be circulated throughout the London Boroughs and produced at the local libraries for one week at a time. Each week there would be a change of film, and at the same time a variation in subject. Sixteen boroughs would be dealt with simultaneously, and a course of sixteen films, extending over a period of sixteen weeks, be assured. In this way the children attending the elementary schools in the borough would be able, by arrangement between the librarian and the teacher, to attend on certain evenings each week. Each film as it is produced would be lectured upon by the librarian, who, as he explained the film, should so stimulate an interest in the minds of the children as to increase their desire for more information; the desire thus created, the librarian would be in a position to satisfy by bringing before the children's notice the most suitable books upon the subject matter of the film—which books, of course, should be obtainable from that library.

I can anticipate here that obvious criticism which maintains that this is not the work of the librarian. But I would ask, what *is* the work of a library? Surely Public Libraries stand, if they stand for anything at all, as the centres of light, learning, information, usefulness, culture, any and all kinds and means of national improvement and public use. The means whereby we work our cause lie in the printed word and to what it appertains. We, as a professional class, cannot limit the sphere of our duties, at any rate, of our opportunities. Like all the finer, higher, nobler things in life, one can only take out of them just as much as one puts into them; just too, so much as we are prepared to put into librarianship, so much will the general public take out of it. Above all things we must be modern, alert, adaptable, abreast of each wave of intellectual thought, at the head of each movement which can be turned to the advantage of librarianship, and make our institutions more and more indispensable. So with the cinema; by bringing this restricted yet potent educational factor within the walls of his library, the librarian will be able to train the young mind how to read for profit and for pleasure; he will be in a position to develop the critical faculty, to encourage the power of discrimination, to

kindle a love of good books, and to give a right and generous impetus to sound reading, whereby the imagination would be more properly developed

It is quite easy to see that once we had got the educational authorities of the country to meet us in this scheme, its extension could be readily adapted to cover the whole of London, the Provincial towns and centres, and in time the rural districts. In order to avoid waste, confusion and overlapping, the work should be conceived and executed nationally, by development through a careful plan of co-operation among the educational authorities of the country. Manchester, Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds, Exeter, etc., could all produce a repertoire of film subjects, mutually exclusive, each covering what the other has left undone. Gradually a large collection of subjects would thus be built up. These stored in a central clearing exchange, properly controlled, organised and classified, could be sent out in rotation all round the country to the various public libraries. Little is required of the imagination to foresee the whole details of this scheme, which I firmly believe worth attempting and reasonably feasible. The films thus acquired by, and through, the educational authorities, and procured for showing and use by the Public Library authorities could not only be devoted to children but to free exhibition to adults as well. The extent to which their use could be developed for adult public purposes depends a great deal upon locality and special conditions. But that they could be generally utilised in a restricted and judicious manner is beyond question, and that the value and popularity of such an innovation leave no doubt to retard the attempt.

By a careful and steady scheme of co-operation on like lines to those which I have indicated for the production and accumulation of a repertoire of films for the children, a series could, for the general public use and edification, be also acquired. Let each big town or district film first the particular industry, trade or peculiarity associated with that district; or any special feature which gives fame and distinction to the place. Manchester, the industrial life and conditions in a cotton mill; Bradford, a day in a wool mill, or how fortunes are made; Birmingham, the secrets of the watch trade—and so on all over the country. In this way would be gathered together a collection of films which would help to show one half of the country how the other half lives. Our

central bureau or library, with sub-bureaux in various parts of the country, would provide a steady and regular change of subjects week by week, month by month as the need demanded. Here then the libraries of the country would be doing a real and lasting educational work in a popular and attractive manner. The vast ignorance on the part of each section of the community, of the life and conditions of the other section is directly responsible for a good deal of that misunderstanding and confusion which disturbs and unsettles the social and domestic life of the nation at the present day. Add to this the natural reticence of an Englishman to be taught anything on any subject of which his ignorance is alarming, and for which he shows no inclination to be enlightened, the wise and discriminating uses of the cinema provide for the eager and energetic educationalist a means of removing the trouble-breeding ignorance of our people without toiling along the hard road of stubborn knowledge. If we can only teach our fellow man something of the social life and surroundings of his brother man; something of the beauty of his own town; the wonders of his own country; we shall be making a big stride along the path towards our desired objective—national indispensability.

Of a purely local nature, of course, the filming of all local public events should be carried out, and the results stored for future generations. The opening of the Town Hall by a prince of the royal blood; the inauguration of the Public Library by the local M.P., etc.; and even a day in the life of the Librarian, should prove a film of real educational value to the local inhabitants, and do much to remove many of the errors of vulgar ignorance and a blunted imagination.

Of course the two questions which naturally arise when we as Librarians face the question of the uses of the cinema for Public Libraries are (1) finance, (2) the life of a film. Finance is the real problem; but I have indicated in these few vague ideas that the cost of production should be borne by the educational authorities. Personally I go so far as to say that if the profession as a body came forward with a clear-cut, definite, attractive, business-like scheme, the educational authorities in many cases would be prepared to give the idea careful consideration and provide the necessary support financially. The educational governors of the land are out to tap every available stream of educational value.

As to the question of the life of a film, I am told on reliable authority that, carefully stored in a special kind of

metal tube, a film can be preserved for a good long number of years.

I have not attempted to deal minutely or exhaustively with this subject but only to give a few disconnected and vagrant ideas and views in the hope that something which so far has not been dealt with laboriously by us, and though perhaps not original or untouched is yet sufficiently off the usual track to stimulate a ready and refreshing flow of bright and new ideas.

This is a subject which has to be taken seriously, for I am fully persuaded that under certain conditions the work of the cinema will be turned to a large and increasing purpose in the general scheme of juvenile and adult education of the land.

CHANGES AND APPOINTMENTS.

* W. POLLITT, F.L.A. (by Diploma), Chief of the Cataloguing Department, Leeds, to be Borough Librarian, Southend-on-Sea. Out of about 65 candidates the following were selected: *F. BARLOW, F.L.A. (Watford); *A. H. GILLGRASS, F.L.A. (Hull); E. R. HIGGS (Southend); and *H. A. SHARP, F.L.A. (by Diploma), (Croydon). Messrs. Pollitt and Sharp were afterwards selected to appear before the Town Council. *Salary* £400.

*J. E. WALKER, F.L.A., Deputy Librarian, to be Chief Librarian, Fulham. There were about 70 candidates, of whom the following comprised the selection: F. C. COLE, F.L.A. (Huddersfield); †F. DALLIMORE, F.L.A. (by Diploma), (Darlington); S. E. HARRISON, F.L.A. (Cheltenham); W. G. HAWKINS (formerly of Fulham); R. LILLIE, F.L.A. (Gateshead); and J. D. STEWART, F.L.A. (Islington). Messrs. Cole and Lillie were prevented from attending. *Salary* £300 plus Bonus.

* Member, L.A.A.

† Fellow, L.A.A.

NEW MEMBERS.

Members: ELSIE DERBYSHIRE (Wigan); H. A. FITZGERALD (Watford)
Associate: S. J. RUTTER (Battersea).

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT.

The Honorary Treasurer regrets to inform the members of the Association that the Deposit Accounts, amounting to about £40, of the Benevolent Fund and the International Committee (Easter Schools) are involved in the suspension of payment by Farrow's Bank.

Further particulars will be given after the next Council meeting.

The financial position of the Council's administrative work is in no way involved.

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